

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OAS

SUBJECT: RIO TREATY VOTING FORMULA

1. ON DECEMBER 3 MEMBERS OF THE OAS SPECIAL COMMITTEE WHICH IS REDRAFTING THE RIO TREATY ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE AN ECUADORAN AMENDMENT PROVIDING FOR A SIMPLE MAJORITY TO LIFT SANCTIONS. THERE IS UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT TO KEEP THE TWO-THIRDS REQUIREMENT FOR IMPOSING SANCTIONS. BECAUSE THE TWO-THIRDS OF THE MEMBERS REQUIRED FOR FORMAL VOTING WERE NOT PRESENT, NO FORMAL DECISION WAS MADE BUT THE ECUADORAN FORMULA IS EXPECTED TO BE ACCEPTED BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY.

2. MOVING WITH UNUSUAL SPEED THE COMMITTEE QUICKLY REACHED AN AGREEMENT BECAUSE A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES MODIFIED THEIR ORIGINAL STAND ON THE VOTING QUESTION. PERU, MEXICO, COSTA RICA, PANAMA, ARGENTINA, AND VENEZUELA HAD ADVOCATED LIFTING SANCTIONS ONCE THEY NO LONGER HAVE TWO-THIRDS SUPPORT. BRAZIL AND THE UNITED STATES HAD PREVIOUSLY INDICATED NO DESIRE TO CHANGE THE PRESENT VOTING FORMULA (TWO-THIRDS VOTE

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TO IMPOSE OR LIFT SANCTIONS). ALL THESE COUNTRIES PLUS

EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA AND URUGUAY EXPRESSED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE ECUADORAN FORMULA. URUGUAY SUGGESTED THAT THE SIMPLE-MAJORITY SHOULD NOT APPLY TO THE CUBAN CASE. THIS VIEW RECEIVED NO SUPPORT. CHILE, WHICH WANTS NO CHANGE IN THE TREATY, WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY PRESENT AT THE MEETING WHICH DID NOT ACCEPT IN PRINCIPLE THE ECUADORAN PROPOSAL.

3. THE QUITO MFM WAS PROBABLY PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONCESSIONS MADE TO REACH THE AGREEMENT ON THE VOTING FORMULA. THE U.S. HAD DECIDED TO SUPPORT THE SIMPLE MAJORITY FORMULA A NUMBER OF MONTHS AGO, BUT REVEALED ITS POSITION PUBLICLY IN THE DECEMBER 3 MEETING FOR THE FIRST TIME.

4. COMMENT: IT IS TOO EARLY, HOWEVER, TO JUDGE IF THE IMPETUS OF THE VOTING FORMULA AGREEMENT WILL CARRY OVER TO THE REST OF THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS PERMITTING AN EARLY AGREEMENT ON A FINAL TEXT, BUT THE PROSPECTS ARE MUCH BETTER NOW. THE SIMPLE MAJORITY VOTING FORMULA WILL HAVE NO EFFECT UNTIL A PROTOCOL OF AMENDMENT HAS BEEN RATIFIED BY TWO-THIRDS OF THE SIGNATORY STATES -- A PROCESS WHICH WILL TAKE SOME TIME. KISSINGER

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